



Alcoholism in Bipolar Disorder: Use Patterns and Treatment Issues

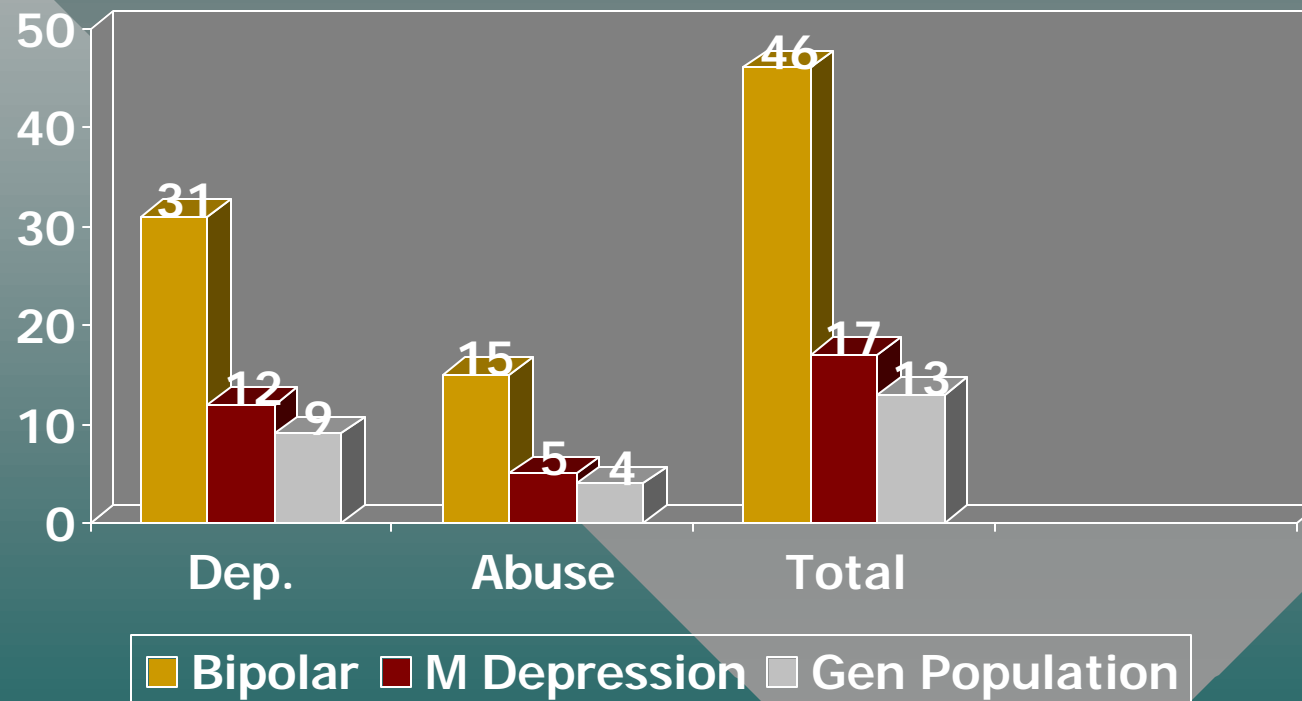
Prevalence

Over half of bipolar disorder diagnosis have an alcohol or drug use disorder

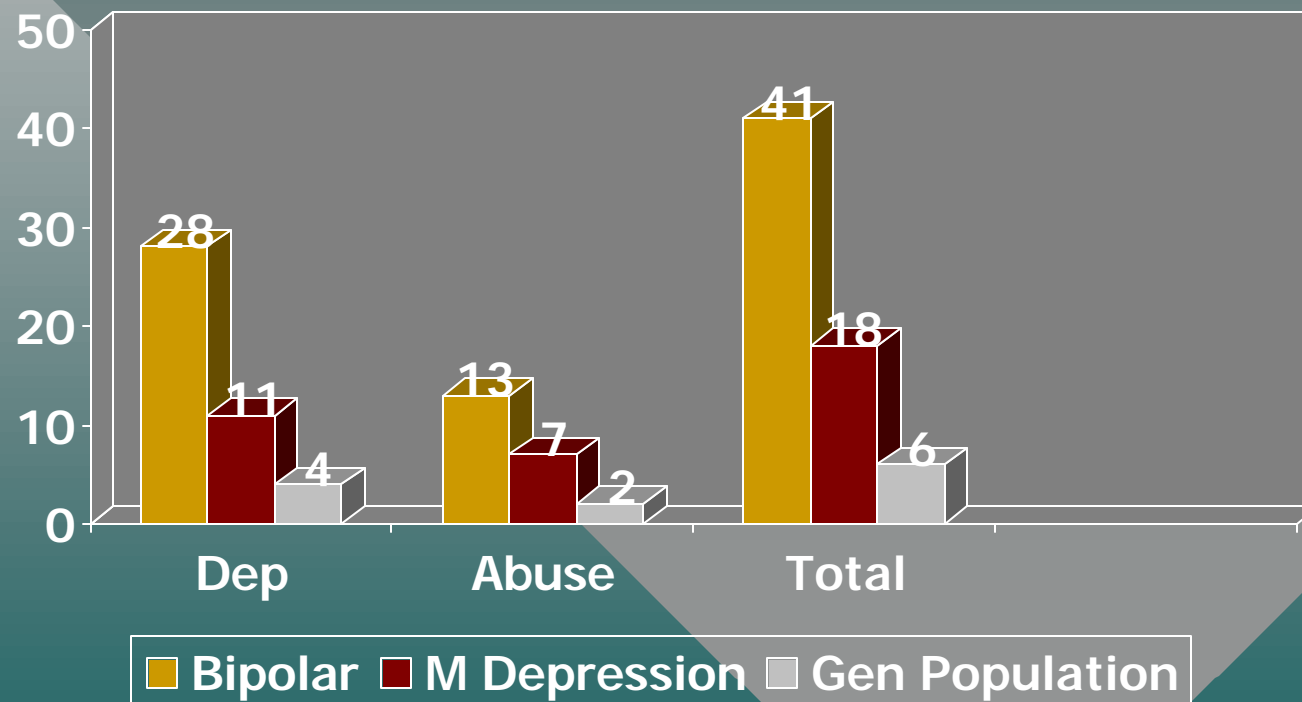
They are 10 & 8 times more likely to have an alcohol or drug use disorder

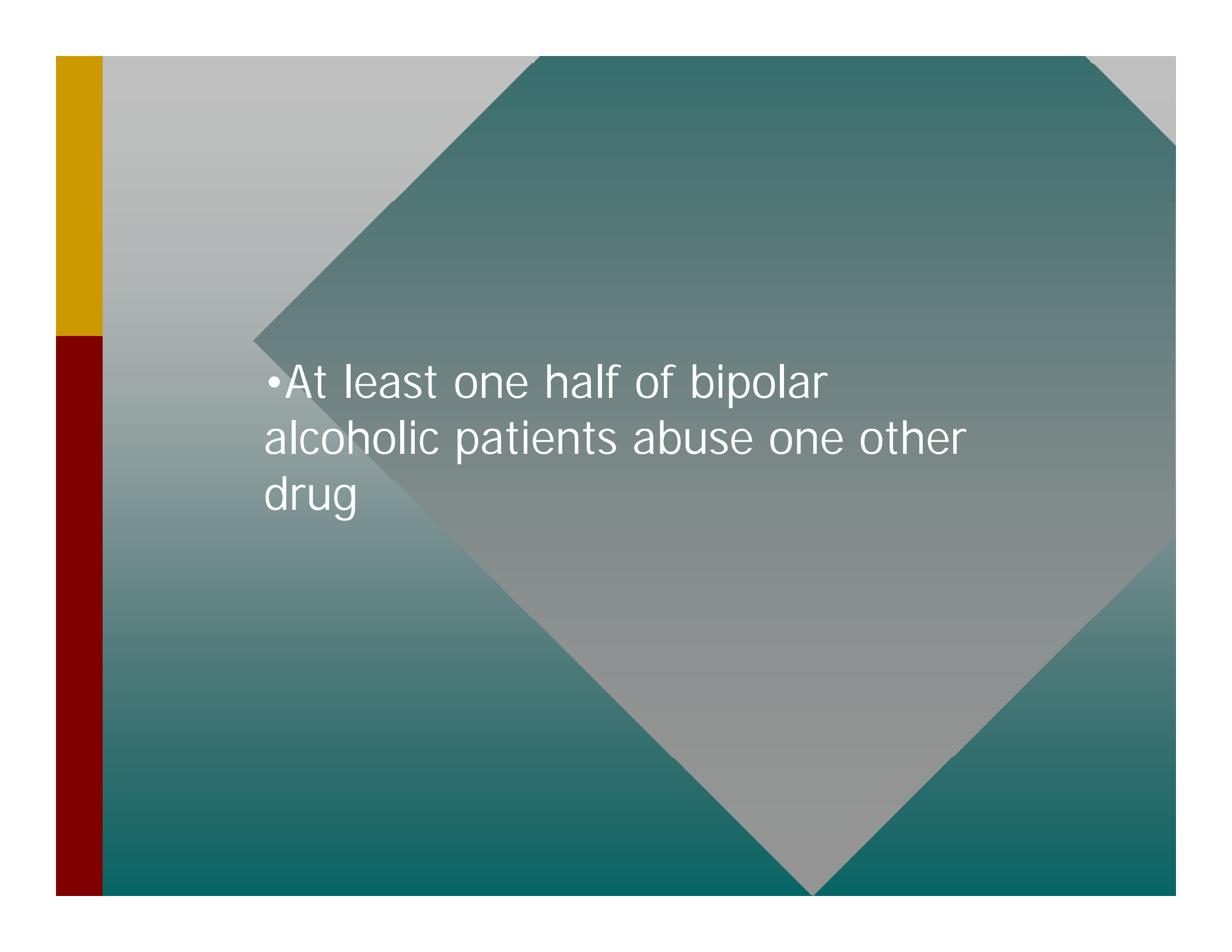
Mania more strongly related to alcohol or drug dependence than any other DSM axis I diagnoses

Alcohol-Bipolar Dis Comorbidity ECA Study



Drug Use-Bipolar Dis. Comorbidity ECA Study



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- At least one half of bipolar alcoholic patients abuse one other drug

Bipolar Disorder in Alcohol and Drug Abuse Population

- Alcoholism 2% - 9%
- Opioid 3% - 6%
- Cocaine 5% - 30%

Impact of Alcohol-Bipolar Disorder Comorbidity

- Poor treatment compliance
- Poor treatment response
- Poor psychosocial functioning
- Increased suicide and violence
- Increased service use

Impact of Alcohol on Bipolar Disorder

- Course Modifier
- Episode Modifier
- Illness Outcome

Alcoholism as Course Modifier of Bipolar Disorder

- Earlier Age of Onset
- Shorter cycle length between episodes
- Persistence of symptoms
- Delayed recovery & shortened time to relapse
- More Frequent episodes

Alcoholism as Episode Modifier of Bipolar Disorder

- Higher total number of symptoms
- Higher rate of depressive symptoms
- High frequency of rapid cycling, mixed, and dysphoric subtypes

Alcoholism as Episode Modifier of Bipolar Disorder

- Increase abruptness and speed of the bipolar episode
- Episode progression, induce subtype “switch”
- Prolongation of the episode

Alcoholism Impact on Outcome of Bipolar Disorder

- Enhanced Chronicity
- Enhanced Disability
- Increased Mortality

Treatment Issues

- Paucity of controlled studies
- No studies published to date
- Treatment based on clinical experience and follow certain general principles

Treatment Issues (cont'd)

- Screening for alcoholism and other PSUD
- Shared goals of achieving sobriety and stabilization of mood state
- Need to vigorously addressing alcoholism
- Need to address associated medical and psychosocial factors

Treatment Issues (cont'd)

- Treatment adherence & medication compliance
- Obstacles to treatment adherence
 - Accessibility & other system issues
 - Provider's reluctance
 - Patient & illness factors, e.g. grandiosity, denial, etc.

Treatment Issues (cont'd)

- Medications with abuse potential
- Medication use for suicidal patients
- Close monitoring of side effects & compliance
- Education, medications blood levels & UDS

Phases of Treatment

- Acute Phase
 - Engagement, detoxification, stabilization
- Continuation Phase
 - Consolidation of remission & sobriety; life style changes
- Maintenance Phase
 - Focus on relapse prevention & recovery

Psychosocial Interventions

- Chemical dependency counseling
- Sobriety/abstinence plan
- Counseling for bipolar disorder
- Self-help

Self-Help

- AA, NA
- Dual Recovery Self-help Groups
- Support to deal with occasional pressure to discontinue medications by some self-help groups

Pharmacotherapy

- Role of Lithium
- Anti-convulsants
 - divalproex
 - carbamazepines
 - gabapentine
- Antidepressants

Valproate Utility in Bipolar Alcoholics

- Alcoholism
 - May reduce alcohol craving
 - Alleviate alcohol withdrawal
 - Antikindling agent & effect on protracted withdrawal?
- Bipolar subtypes: Mixed, dysphoric & rapid cyclers

Pharmacotherapy for Alcoholism

- Disulfiram
- Naltrexone
- Acamprosate